

BROWNEDGE ST MARYS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Signature of Head Teacher/Chair of Governors

Date:

Policy devised by: M Bolton

Date: January 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

If we love others, we live in the light. 1 John 2:10

Inspired by our Gospel Values we have a shared responsibility to:-

- create an environment of welcome, love and respect for each member of our learning family.
- develop the unique gifts and talents of all, striving for excellence in everything we do.
- live out our commitment to love, service and justice in the local and global community.
- nurture the journey of faith and discovery for all.
- celebrate and reflect on the love of God, which is at the heart of all we are.

Rationale

Brownedge St Mary's is committed to creating a learning environment where all pupils feel valued and welcomed in which they feel safe and secure. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence.

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Pupils who are absent from school miss important teaching and learning opportunities which leave them vulnerable to falling behind both socially and academically. Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are essential life skills and there is extensive evidence which demonstrates a strong correlation between excellent attendance and academic success.

At Brownedge St Mary's we recognise that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning. We recognise the critical role which parents/guardians hold in supporting their child's learning and in continually encouraging them to attend school as frequently as possible. As a school we are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to ensure all pupils achieve good attendance and punctuality.

We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity is made to promote the importance to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Aim of the Policy

We will

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.

- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole school attendance levels.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.

Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

We have a procedural framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities for

- Parents and carers
- Pupils
- School staff
- Governors

to complement this policy, and identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This procedural framework will include guidance on

- Registration
- What constitutes unauthorised absence
- Consistent use of symbols for authorised absence
- Leave of absence
- Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual pupils
- Systems for dealing with absence
- Criteria and systems for referral to other agencies and services
- Systems for reintegrating pupils who have been absent
- Systems for monitoring whole school attendance and Action Planning
- Appropriate alternative curricular arrangement

Leave in term time

After illness, the taking of holidays during term time is the largest cause of absence from schools in England. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education and a possible prosecution fine if your holiday is not approved. **There is no automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time.**

All applications for leave must be made using the local authority leave of absence form. Only in **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances in advance, by the parent of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' form from the school office. Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be **exceptional**. We may ask for evidence, for example a letter from the hospital, employer, ask to see the flight ticket email which shows the dates of the holiday and booking etc. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupils may be granted absence from

school. All leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion

Procedures are available from the school and on the school website but it is important that you understand that leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be **exceptional**.

In considering the request we will also look at various factors such as:

- The timing of the request:
 - When a pupil is just starting the school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
 - Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods e.g. GCSE or any other public examinations.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below 97% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave.
- other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. Periods of leave taken without the agreement of school, or in excess of the time agreed, may lead to fixed penalty fines of up to £60 per parent, per child, rising to £120. Fines are issued by the local authority.

In certain circumstances, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Readmission cannot be guaranteed. The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

Religious Absence

The school may authorise one day 'leave' (i.e. the day set aside by the Religious Body of which the parent is a member). Parents must request this leave in advance.

Use of Penalty Notices

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School will request Lancashire Local Authority to issue a Penalty notice in line with the Lancashire County Council Guidelines:

- When a pupil has had a minimum of 10 half day sessions lost to unauthorised absence in any term.
- When all school procedures have been followed to secure a reason for the absence, unauthorised holidays, persistent lateness after the registers have closed without success.

- If a penalty notice is unsuccessful in improving the attendance of a pupil then the school will consider further action such as prosecution under section 444(a) of the 1996 education act. If found guilty this attracts a maximum fine of £1,500 per parent.

Persistent Absenteeism PA:

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% (i.e. 90%) or more of their schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence codes of O, G and U (failure to register before 9.30) will count in these figures. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. The school ensures that support is given to pupils at risk of persistent absence in conjunction with external authorities where necessary.

We monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be given priority consideration, and parents will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral and attendance systems and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents will be offered support to improve the pupil's attendance. This may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, home visits, individual incentive programmes, parenting contracts and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.

Partnership Working

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School will work with the support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School will adopt systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future Action Planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

Review of Whole School Attendance Policy

The governors of Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School will review this policy along with the associated procedural framework at least annually.

Whole School Attendance Policy Procedural Framework

Current Status

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School is constantly working to achieve regular and good attendance by all its pupils. **At Browndge St Mary's High school, good attendance is categorised as 97% or over.** Now the school is using appropriate national guidelines for setting overall attendance targets.

Responsibilities

Good attendance at school is the responsibility of parents, pupils and school staff, with local authority support as needed. Browndge St Mary's operates a policy of working in partnership to improve attendance.

It is the responsibility of Parents & Carers to

- Ensure children attend regularly, punctually, appropriately dressed and with all necessary equipment.
- Instil the value of education and encourage regular attendance and excellent punctuality.
- Inform the school if your child is going to be late, prior to them arriving.
- Contact school on 1st day of absence before 9.30.
- Provide a satisfactory explanation of their child's absence.
- For continued absence, school should be contacted every day.
- Avoid leave in term time.
- Complete a leave of absence request form should there be an occasion whereby their child will be absent from school other than illness.
- Attend meetings if concerns of attendance are identified.
- Participate in Attendance Panel Meetings where appropriate, and if the parent is unavailable allow the meeting to proceed with the pupil, Governor (acting on behalf of the pupil), Attendance lead and Attendance Officer.
- Support the school in agreed interventions/action plans.
- Arrange medical and other appointments, where possible outside of school hours
- Inform the school of any difficulties their child is facing which could hinder their attendance and punctuality.
- Notify the school of any changes regarding parent/carer contact details.

It is the responsibility of Pupils to:

- Acknowledge the appropriate behaviour needed out of school e.g. early bedtimes to allow punctual attendance
- Attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence- pupils should aim for a minimum of 97% attendance
- Attend school/registration punctually.
- Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration, sign in on late arrival and carry out appropriate sanctions (break time detention arrival before 9.30am and after school detention for arrival after 9.30am.)
- Make efforts to catch up with any work missed due to absence.

- Discuss with school staff any barriers which may affect their attendance and punctuality.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Head Teacher to:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters.
- Liaise with the attendance manager to make appropriate interventions to increase pupil attendance
- Inform Head of Houses of pupils who have unsatisfactory attendance.
- Ensure adequate time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance

It is the responsibility of all Staff to:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns.
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance.
- To be aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all pupils
- To see pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff
- To participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

It is the responsibility of Governors to:

- Adopt a policy on attendance and review the policy annually.
- Agree targets for attendance for the school.
- Be aware of attendance issues through its committee structure.

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to:

- Issue Penalty notices on behalf of the school in line with the local authority code of conduct and the school's policy and this procedural framework
- Initiate the use of School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders.
- Prosecute parents in line with school and local authority procedures.

Procedures

Registration

- The registration periods for Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School are:
8.50am – 9.05am for the morning session
2.55pm – 3.05pm for the afternoon session
- Pupils who arrive late for the morning session **MUST** sign in at pupil reception. **If a pupil arrives after 9.30 without a reason a U code is given and the pupil will receive an after school detention until 4.00pm. Parents will be informed of this.**
- If a pupil needs to sign out of school during a session, they must bring a note from their parent indicating the reason. The reception staff will then record the date and time of their leaving.
- When the pupil returns to school (if appropriate) they should once again report to reception, where the time will be recorded.
- If a child is ill and unable to come to school, parents should ring the school and speak to a member of the office staff or leave a message on the school system
- The office staff will record the messages on an absence appointment sheet and pass this to the Attendance Manager/Officer so that the absence can be recorded on PARS
- Only the attendance officer is authorised to amend absence codes.
- The attendance officer liaises with other establishments to ensure that the attendance of dual registered pupils, and pupils on work experience or other Approved Educational Activities is recorded accurately
- Pupils who are involved in other activities during registration should be marked absent by the form tutor. The attendance officer will then amend absence codes by checking with a list provided by the appropriate member of the teaching staff
- The Attendance officer in consultation with the Assistant Headteacher is responsible for checking consistency of use of symbols, and acceptable reasons for absence across the whole school
- An absence will be recorded as unauthorised where there has been no contact or where a parent/carer has failed to give a reasonable explanation for the absence. Pupils with poor attendance ($\leq 90\%$) will be asked to produce evidence of appointments with doctors, hospitals, dentists etc to authorise any absences.
- Home visits may be commissioned by the school where there are concerns regarding a pupil's absence.

Roles within school

Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer reports to the Assistant Headteacher on matters of attendance and punctuality. Specific responsibilities include:

- Operation of the PARS system for recording attendance
- Operating the school's first day contact system by calling parents/carers directly on the first day of a child's absence where no note or telephone call has been received from home.
- Contacting parents following unexplained absences as per pupil absence procedures
- Co-ordinating Governor's Attendance Panel Meetings
- Making home visits (with another colleague on occasions) as requested by the Assistant Headteacher
- the monitoring and recording attendance of pupils who are receiving education elsewhere.
- the review of registers and to identify trends of absence.
- monitoring lateness as per pupil late procedures
- collating whole school attendance data for analysis by the Assistant Headteacher (and others as appropriate e.g. heads of year) this includes:
 - Patterns of broken weeks by individual pupils
 - Patterns of absence for individual pupils
 - Misuse or inconsistent use of absence codes across the school
 - Trends in reasons for absence
- The training of admin staff on the use of the PARS system for recording and monitoring attendance
- submitting attendance data to the Local Authority and the DfE

Assistant Head Teacher

Is responsible for:

- the overall implementation and monitoring of the Attendance Policy
- sharing information about the policy and related attendance matters with governors.
- the communication and training of school teaching staff in procedures and protocols, including use of correct codes for absence recording and their role in meeting targets for attendance

- liaising with the attendance officer and heads of house with issues of concern about attendance
- liaising with the Assistant Head Teacher in charge of Inclusion with issues that may need additional support
- requesting Penalty Notices in line with this policy and the Local Authority guidelines
- Pupil attendance trackers and attendance passport for targeted pupils
- Panel decision, meetings and follow ups.

Attendance Register

Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day, at the beginning of each lesson and at the end of the school day. The register records whether pupils are: present, absent, attending an approved educational visit or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence is monitored and recorded consistently. The following codes will be used:

- / Present AM registration
- \ Present PM registration
- L late arrival
- C authorised absence
- E exclusion but no alternative provision made
- H authorised holiday
- I illness (informed by parents)
- M medical or dental appointment
- R religious observance
- B offsite education activity
- G unauthorised holiday
- O unauthorised absence
- U arrived after registration has closed
- N reason not yet provided for absence
- X not required to be in school
- T Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence
- V educational visit or trip
- P participation in a supervised sporting activity
- D dual registered – at another pre-organised educational establishment
- Y exceptional circumstances
- Z pupil not on admission register

Strategies for promoting/improving attendance.

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School is clear that good attendance and behaviour is vital for success in school. As such the school uses a variety of strategies to promote good attendance. These include:

- Regular attendance is promoted with parents in school literature e.g. letters home, school prospectus.
- Attendance is promoted at parent events such as induction evenings and year group information evenings
- The attendance officer regularly monitors the attendance of pupils who are below the target level of attendance. Absences are communicated to the Head of Houses and the Assistant Headteacher.
- Rewards are given to pupils and groups with excellent attendance, e.g. certificates, non-uniform days and vouchers.
- Admission to rewards trips requires pupils to have met the specified attendance target each term
- Punctuality is promoted through rewarding pupils weekly with positive reward points. These points contribute to the admission to the rewards trip held each term.
- Whole school targets for attendance are agreed with the School Improvement Partner. This impact upon the monitoring of year groups, forms and individual pupils.

Strategies for reintegration

For pupils who have had an extended absence for whatever reason, arrangements will be made to reintegrate them into school on an individual basis. Most integration programmes will involve meetings with the pupil, parents and whatever other agencies are needed:

- Following exclusion, this will usually be managed by the Assistant Headteacher in charge of behaviour or the Head of House
- Following an extended illness (including school refusal) or medical reason the integration will be managed by the SEND in consultation with the head of house.
- Following extended periods of truancy this will usually be managed by the Head of House alongside the Assistant Headteacher responsible for behaviour/pastoral.

Penalty Notices

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School will request Lancashire Local Authority to issue a Penalty notice in line with the Lancashire County Council Guidelines:

- When a pupil has had a minimum of 10 half day sessions lost to unauthorised absence in any term.

- When all school procedures have been followed to secure a reason for the absence, unauthorised holidays, persistent lateness after the registers have closed without success.
- If a penalty notice is unsuccessful in improving the attendance of a pupil then the school will consider further action such as prosecution under section 444(a) of the 1996 education act. If found guilty this attracts a maximum fine of £1,500 per parent.

Pupils who are missing

Pupils are not permitted to leave the school premises throughout the day unless they have permission from the school following contact from parents. The following procedures will be undertaken if a pupil is identified as missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the pupil is missing will inform the attendance officer immediately.
- Any available staff will conduct thorough searched of the school premises as directed by the attendance officer.
- The following areas will be searched: toilets, classrooms, changing rooms, library/ELC, any outbuildings and the school grounds
- CCTV will be checked to establish the child's whereabouts.
- If, after 10 minutes, the child cannot be found, then parents will be notified by telephone
- Attempts will be made to contact parents/carers using the emergency telephone numbers provided
- If parents or anyone one else provided on the emergency contact lists have had no contact with the pupil, then the police will be contacted and informed of the missing pupil
- Details leading up to the child leading up to the child going missing will be forwarded to police
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked after child, or has any SEND then appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the child has been located, members of staff (Head of House, SLT year link, Pastoral Managers) will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and other agencies will immediately be informed to when the child has been located

The appropriate Head of House or Assistant Headteacher will take appropriate action to ensure pupils understand they must not leave the premises throughout the school day. Sanctions will be issued to pupils if this is deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Children Missing Education

When pupils are absent, it is an expectation that parents contact school on the **first day** of their child's absence and **each** subsequent day.

- The attendance manager will make contact with parents when no reason for absence is given.

- If there the attendance manager is unable to make contact with parents and the child is absent after three days, a home visit will be made.
- If there is no response during the home visit, a note will be posted through the door requesting parents make contact with the school as soon as possible
- All contacts on the pupils school record will be contacted to establish the pupil's whereabouts
- When this results in establishing the pupil has left the area, contact will be made with the CME team in the new authority (if we are unable to ascertain details of the new school) or the new school if we are informed of one
- After these enquiries are made, if there is still no information regarding the pupils whereabouts, a referral will be made to the Lancashire CME team via an online form provided by the authority
- The CME team will then advise when the pupil can be removed from the school roll.

Removal from Roll

The school may only remove pupils from roll in accordance with the criteria set out in Regulation 9 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

If a child moves from the area, and school has had written notification from the parent or guardian, the child will be removed from roll. In such cases a referral to the CME (Child Missing Education) team should also be made.

If a pupil fails to attend school, and it appears, following attempts to contact home, that the pupil has left the area then the school will refer the pupil to the appropriate service (After 20 days of failure to attend school the pupil may be removed from the school roll) otherwise:

- Pupils who may have gone missing will be identified by the Attendance Officer.
- If a pupil is identified as missing then the Assistant Head will refer such pupils to Lancashire Local Authority.
- The Attendance Officer is responsible for completing the Common Transfer Form under the s2s system once a pupil has been traced elsewhere. In the absence of a destination school the CTF should be posted when the pupil transfers to an independent school, moves abroad or when they transfer to Elective Home Education. The CTF should be posted when it is unknown whether pupils have been put on roll at another school. In all cases the CME team should be notified.
- If a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established then the school will seek the support of the LA in locating the pupil.
- The attendance officer will notify the Authority that a pupil has been removed from roll to be educated otherwise than at school (as required by Regulation 13 (3) of the above regulations) in accordance with accepted Lancashire protocols.

Systems for dealing with attendance issues

School based systems for dealing with lateness

Punctuality is a measure of how seriously education is considered by pupils. Daily registration is a legal requirement that helps ensure the school is a safe working environment. The law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

Pupils who arrive late to school and lessons will be sanctioned. The number of minutes late pupils accrue within a week period will be calculated. Any pupils who have accrued more than 10 minutes late within the week, for poor punctuality at the start of the school day or between lessons (8.45am – 3.05pm), will be sanctioned through an after-school detention.

The length of the sanction will be 10 minutes plus the number of minutes late for that week. For example, if a pupil is late for a total of 15 minutes throughout the school week, they will serve 10 minutes plus their 15 minutes of lateness, totalling 25 minutes. This will be held on the following Monday as a result of their previous week of poor punctuality.

However, pupils who arrive after 9.30am will still receive a one hour detention after school on the day of their lateness. Lateness of this magnitude severely affects a pupil's attendance and progress therefore lateness of this duration will remain to see an instant punishment.

The formal close of morning registration is 9.30am. If a pupil arrives after 9.30am without a valid reason, they will be given a U code. These pupils will receive an after school detention and parents will be informed. Parents will be alerted for all punctuality sanctions through the school text system.

Under rules set out by the Government 'Schools don't have to give parents notice of after-school detentions or tell them why a detention has been given' available at: <https://www.gov.uk/school-disciplineexclusions>

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, a parent is responsible for ensuring that their child of compulsory school age (5-16) receives sufficient and suitable education, either by regular school attendance or other arrangements. This means that the parent of a child registered at a school has a legal duty to ensure the child's regular attendance. Failure to fulfil this duty is an offence under section 444(1) or section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and could result in a penalty notice or prosecution. Penalty notices for persistent lateness is defined as 12 unauthorised absences (U) over any 6 week period.

School based systems for dealing with absences

Form tutors and heads of house are responsible for registering the pupils at the morning and afternoon sessions. Pupils are rewarded for good attendance with positive behaviour points, reward trips, prize draws etc. The Attendance Lead/Attendance officer will identify the attendance tracker pupils at the end of a term and contact parents to inform them that their child will be monitored by their form tutors on a weekly basis.

Monitoring, Analysis, Evaluation and Action Planning

Whole school attendance is monitored by the attendance officer and the Assistant Head Teacher. Good attendance by individuals and groups is rewarded on a regular basis and a high priority is given to good attendance through the celebration assemblies at the end of each term. The data obtained informs action planning at whole school level during the processes of evaluating and rewriting the school improvement plan each Autumn Term. Year group data is also used by heads of house when writing their development plans early in the Spring Term, which will include specific targets as needed. Key events, such as reviewing policies and procedures, are carried out as part of the ongoing meetings cycle of senior leaders and governors.

All data requested by outside bodies, e.g. the Local Authority and DfE are returned within deadlines by the Senior Team.